

"Hist! Do not let her see thee."

"Nay, rather, do not let her hear thee; she is blind."

"Blind?"

"Ay! Stone blind; but what matters it when she carries a singing bird in her throat. Do they not blind the nightingale?"

Both men now advanced cautiously, their sandaled feet making little sound on the shelf-like plateau upon which yawned several recesses cut deep into the solid rock. In the door of one of these recesses sat, or rather crouched, the figure of a young girl. Her blue-black hair, gathered away from her forehead and plaited in several thick braids, revealed a thin face, delicately featured, the smooth brown cheeks faintly flushed with a warmth, which in the drooping mouth deepened to scarlet. Her eyes were large and black, but curiously expressionless, like the eyes of the great god Ptah in the temple below. For the rest, she was dressed in the shapeless blue linen robe of an Egyptian peasant woman, about her neck hung a string of shining coins, and upon the slender ankles tinkled hoops of wrought silver.

At the sound of the stealthy feet upon the rock, the blind girl bent her head anxiously.

"Is it you, Seth?" she said doubtfully.

"Nay, little one," said one of the men, advanc-